

"I knocked on the door, but no one answered," George says. "So I walked over to the car. The first thing I did was lift the hood. It was so rusty it barely opened. The engine had a Hi-Po distributor and balancer." George couldn't be sure the internals were Hi-Po so he'd have to ask the owner for more information. Then he got one of the surprises of his life.

"I opened the door and about fainted. It had a Shelby steering wheel."

The wheel looked all the more nostalgic entwined with honeysuckle vines, which had grown through holes in the floor. In the world of collectible Mustangs, certain key parts can fetch more money than whole cars. An original Shelby steering wheel, which features real wood, is a coveted prize.

George calculated that the steering wheel had to be worth at least \$2,000. He recalled selling a '67 Shelby horn button for between \$600 and \$800 on eBay.

"I figured I'd make the guy an offer of \$2,000 for the car and he'd probably be happy because it's a rusted piece of junk. Then I could sell the engine for anywhere from \$2,000 to \$5,000, depending on how much of it was Hi-Po, and I'd get a free Shelby steering wheel, not to mention the other parts on the car."

The owner didn't accept the offer on the spot. Instead, he walked George over to another Fairlane, a '64 under a tarp. George had no interest in this car. He just kept his offer on the table and made no mention of the steering wheel inside the '63.

Obviously, the '63 Fairlane was worthless except for the parts. The owner explained he'd been saving the '63 for the drivetrain, which he planned to drop into the '64.

George felt he was better off to not mention the Shelby steering wheel. Much less of a prize



was the 289 Hi-Po, which was still valuable. Who knows what would have happened to the Shelby wheel if the owner hadn't saved the '63 to preserve its drivetrain?

Powell has seen a '67 Shelby steering wheel sell for \$4,600 on eBay. He put \$500 into the wheel's restoration. The engine turned out to be an authentic K-code Hi-Po; it

fetches \$3,600 on eBay.

As a bonus, George found an additional Hidden Treasure in the trunk—an extra Hi-Po distributor, worth \$300.

After stripping the car, George gave the '63 body to a junk man, who hauled it off for free. He's still got the Shelby steering wheel, which now looks brand-new.

VINTAGE LITERATURE

Hidden Treasures encompass literature as well as parts and cars. Rick Parker of Signature Auto Classics in Columbus, Ohio, hunts them all. His friend Danny Rader called one Saturday afternoon from a garage sale. "You've got to see this."

Danny had gone to the garage sale to buy engine parts and noticed a blue Shelby Cobra GT350/500 parts book in a three-ring binder. "I asked him if the parts book looked new," Rick says. "He said it looked old. It had old dates in it and the paper inside looked old."

The cover had a patina too. Rick didn't hesitate. He jumped in his car and headed east to the little town of Outville, Ohio. There was always the chance someone else would buy the book. Except, at \$125, the price wasn't cheap.

Rick walked into the garage past wheels, tires, a go-kart, and lawn furniture. The sale was sparsely attended. He recognized a face from the past. Tom Eitel was a friend from his drag racing days in mid to late 1970s. They began talking about old times. Rick recalled the '67 Shelby GT350 that Tom raced at Marion County Raceway.

Rick put two and two together and figured it was Tom's garage sale. He found the blue Shelby

